31st Dec 1869

Rome old years day

My dear Marcia

A little delay caused by the city being under water from the sudden overflow of the Tiber – some 10 thousand people are shut up without food or fire I have been in great activity getting up a subscription & yesterday got 4 thousand francs amongst English people

The new govt has now to feed all this 10 thousand people – bread soon runs short, but Naples & the Roman towns have supplied it — The King came this morg without state to visit the sufferers – Yesterday I went on the barge with 6 sacks of bread It was a singular sight – every window occupied up 4 stories with the people

letting down baskets to get the loaves
The river is tremendous in its rapid
course & sweeps over the city carrying
away every thing - the shops are gutted
& the Jews quarter the water is up to
the 2d floor !! - So I'm sure you will
understand the delay forced upon me in
my official position

I now send the order as usual
but it is to my Son Walter who is now
my agent — Excuse great haste

Your loving Joe

Dont send for a week as I
send my account on the 2d Jan